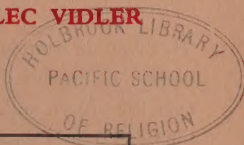


THE FRONTIER

A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

EDITED BY
PHILIP MAIRET AND ALEC VIDLER



OCTOBER 1950

Vol. I No. 10

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EDUCATION IN PALESTINE

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THE FRONTIER

A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE
COMMON LIFE

Vol. I. No. 10.

OCTOBER 1950

Notes of the Month

THE main theme of *The Frontier* this month is Palestine under the transforming conditions of the new State of Israel. Three special articles are contributed by writers who have worked for years in Palestine, where one of them is still engaged in education, and their concern is with the continuing interests of Christians in the Holy Land. The aim of our introductory notes is to reconsider the importance of the revival of Israel as a temporal power, now when public opinion is otherwise pre-occupied and the political passions surrounding the Zionist achievement are in abeyance.

The Return to Zion

Israel's repatriation as a modern State is partly, we would say primarily, a religious phenomenon. Underlying all the political designs and changing tactics that led Britain, America, and even some other Powers to further the Zionist cause, there has been a constant pressure, not less important because only partly conscious, from the fact that their people worship the same God and read the same scriptures as the Jews. The same prophecies of restoration which sustained the hopes of Israel through ages of exile and

fired the Zionists with irresistible zeal were also learned in millions of Christian homes and schools all over the world, especially among Protestants. Before 1900, when Zionism was in its infancy, and not even directed exclusively toward Palestine, there were minor Christian sects, such as Seventh Day Adventists and Christadelphians, who deduced from the books of Daniel and Revelation that the Jews would shortly return to Palestine, when the Second Coming of the Lord would be close at hand. The vast majority, it is true, among both Jews and Christians, held no such views; some said on the contrary that the Old Testament prophets had always warned the Jews against nationalist politics; many Christians thought that the Covenant of the Promised Land had been at once abrogated and fulfilled by that of the Kingdom of God; in Central Europe Zionism added to the pathological fear and hatred that the anti-semites felt for everything Jewish. But whether or not they sympathized with the Zionists, all Christian peoples had some instinctive sympathy with their emotion and aspiration. And from the moment when the Balfour Declaration re-opened the door of the Promised Land to the Diaspora an extraordinary mixture of political, economic and fortuitous influences sped them on their homeward way. The positive Zionward movement drew everything into its service, whilst negative opinion was divided and wavering. Political efforts intended to oppose the project ended in promoting it. The new state emerged as if by a miracle, indeed that is what it is: an answer to seventeen centuries of Jewish prayer; a proof of the power of prophecy to bring about its own fulfilment.

The Imperial Highway

Yet from another standpoint the Zionist movement was all along being used as a trump card in the poker-play between the great powers of the world. Perhaps the greatest stake they were gambling for was motor-fuel; Palestine happening to be on the edge of the greatest oil reservoir known to exist on earth. To Britain, however, the Power

most heavily committed both to sponsor the Zionists' cause and to keep peace throughout the Middle East, even oil was secondary to the maintenance of what is so often called "the highway to the East". The region is almost like the hub of the world, on which every conqueror has sought to lay his hand: and Britain could not have kept the highways open for the first world-wide commercial empire without securing the control of this ancient cross-roads for itself, or at least denying it to any other great Power. This imperial motive was certainly present in Britain's original sponsorship of the limited scheme of a "national home" for Jewry, but it was never more badly misplaced. Up to the end of the first world war, Britain's ascendancy in the Middle East had been fairly easy to maintain, but from that time onward it appeared to be nothing but a succession of defeats, until the State of Israel was born in bloodshed and bitterness and the British left the Jews there to work out their own destiny.

Divided Aims

The last part of the story, in its formidable setting of power-politics, has just been brilliantly outlined by a well-known journalist, Mr. Jon Kimche.¹ His book will recall many bitter controversies but is, on the whole, a fair and instructive narrative. It is a tale of divided aims in the ranks of all the parties engaged. The Jewish immigrants held and still hold the most diverse and even opposite social and political doctrines, at all degrees from apathy to fanaticism. Most preferred political protection to an autonomous state, and nothing would have united them but the desperation to which events finally reduced them. To the British Government behind the Administration, the Mandate it held from a defunct League of Nations was but one piece it had to play in a far bigger game, and at every crisis it wanted too many different things to know which it wanted most. Sometimes Britain supported Jewish claims against the Arabs, sometimes the Arabs in general against the Jews;

¹ *The Seven Fallen Pillars*. By Jon Kimche, Secker & Warburg. 15s.

at another time seemed to rely on the League of all Arab States, and then again fostered the ambitions of one Arab state against another; for the Arabs' purposes were also divided, and their common antagonism to Zionism, real as it was, had no assured priority over their mutual dynastic jealousies. What cause could prosper, amongst all these cross-currents, except that of the Jewish minority united, in the end, by the sheer instinct of self-preservation? The British Government, burdened with increasing responsibilities, and with diminishing means to fulfil them, wavered between policies as inconsistent as Mr. Kimche shows them to have been. As he also says—and this makes his tale all the sadder:—

Few countries have been blessed with such servants as the Englishmen who worked in the Middle East during the first world war and afterwards . . . they were endowed with abilities far beyond those normally found in colonial officials; they had vision, imagination, and ability.

And yet their work was, in sum, frustrated, although, as this observer also recognizes, they were men who, whatever happens, will have left their mark and a lasting influence in that part of the world. The vision and sincerity of these men were in each case applied to different Middle Eastern causes—educational, economic, constructively social. They might be either sympathizers with the Zionists or, like Lawrence and Glubb, great lovers of the Arabs, but their direct interests were ameliorative and humane and they were let down by the failure of the authority on which they depended to bring their various works to a good conclusion.

The Surrender of Authority

It is all too easy, as this book shows, to be wise after events and to criticize policies and experiments which led to trouble without suggesting what course would have avoided it. The writer we quote thinks that Britain failed to achieve right and beneficent ends in the Middle East because its statesmen's ideas on the subject were fifty years

out of date ; that they realized too little of the changes that had occurred in economic and social conditions and in popular aspirations in these countries since the days before Zionism was a factor. Much of this could be true, and yet be less important than other things that these statesmen did understand and try to deal with. Mr. Kimche gives our Foreign Office no credit for any wisdom, except in one respect : he thinks they showed skill in the way they involved the U.S.A. in Middle Eastern affairs, and made it take over much of the responsibilities Britain no longer felt strong enough to discharge. Some critics bristle at this suggestion more than they need, for if there was an underlying purpose to place responsibility where in principle it always ought to be—in hands powerful enough to hold it—there was nothing wrong in that. The deplorable circumstances in which the British Mandate came to an end are, however, most simply explained by the general truth that after the second world war circumstances had made such a responsibility untenable by anyone : in the end it was the British public which refused in round terms to proceed with it. To recognize this is not to condone errors that were made, arising from the emotional confusion of officials placed in a false position. These men were already powerless to prevent a period of uncertainty and violence, in which many causes to which good people had given devoted service would be swept away or left to sink or swim : for a time the Jews themselves were appalled at the hazard. But their passion to regain their promised land, which had made chaos inevitable, was now the only force capable of restoring order.

The Great Breakdown

The actual warfare was brief and, as modern wars go, not very bloody, though there were some atrocities, including one disgraceful massacre of Arabs. The Arabs were the real sufferers in what had become, after all, the ruthless struggle of an invading people to dispossess others of their

land. Hundreds of thousands of Arabs, many of whom had been living on excellent terms with Jews, fled from their homes ; their miseries as displaced persons continue still to be a subject of international argument and inadequate charity whilst their absorption into surrounding countries is slowly and painfully proceeding. As for the policy of the Arab Governments which had leagued together against Zionism, it was an ignominious failure ; all it did was to turn their mutual relations into a witch's cauldron of intrigue, recrimination and of assassinations in high quarters. All the schemes of the powerful were brought to nothing. For Britain, the end was a humiliation ; U.N.O. was flouted, its intervention disregarded and its chosen emissary callously murdered ; ambitious plans for Middle Eastern exploitation were set back in the diplomatic confusion. Everyone's politics were confounded, with the one exception.

Dream and Reality

The Zionist cause emerged with triumph beyond all expectations, even beyond its own hopes. But the State it has founded is a thing peculiar and unprecedented. It is not yet anything like the vision of it which was entertained by some of the elder statesmen of Britain and America when they first agreed to sponsor Jewish settlements in Palestine. Their view of the far future was that this Jewish enclave, gradually developing its own homeland, would enter into mutually helpful relations with the vast Arabian hinterland. It would be more urban and industrial than the Arab countries, better equipped in hygiene and science, and, by its example and its economic interchanges with their peasant economies it would provide initiative and stimulus that would raise all these states into a new sphere of co-prosperity, perhaps surpassing the rich agrarian empires which, in Biblical ages, covered all the vast plains around the Tigris and Euphrates. But to turn from dream to reality, Israel is a tiny territory, endowed by nature with slender agricultural and

much slighter industrial resources. Its spirit is still introverted, it is the refuge for Jews from all countries, and those who now crowd into it come more from other Middle Eastern than from Western lands. To accommodate this rapid influx of population it is working with immense energy to develop every resource it has, with a passionate belief in its future. Yet its very existence is a defiance of all economic law. Its imports cost about ten times as much as it can earn by exports, and it cannot trade to any extent with its Arab neighbours for, apart from political opposition, Israel's standard of costs is so much higher than that of the Arabs that it cannot make goods cheap enough for them to buy. For long to come, perhaps permanently, there would seem no way for Israel to make up its deficit except by loans and gifts from co-religionists in the Western world. If so, this country, where the language of the Bible has revived as the daily speech of a living people, will be able to continue only as it came into being, as the expression of a racial-religious romance, supported by the piety of its exiles. Perhaps the reality is the dream, and can never be anything else.

The Mission of Jewry

Pascal regarded the survival of the Jews as an ordinance of God, that until the end of the world they should bear witness to the historic truth of Christ's Incarnation. It may be that they can only fulfil that function in the present state of the world, by the colossal advertisement which their re-occupation of the Holy Land provides. Certainly nothing that man could have devised could have so directed world attention to that rootedness of the Faith in history of which we have lately heard so much from our theologians. Since the essence of the Christian revelation lies in the Incarnation, it has a concern with space no less than with time. The true God made himself known to faith and then became present in person in this geographical situation, still visibly the critical meeting place between world-cultures, the region

where the three chief continents join, in which civilization began—and could now easily meet its doom. The obvious, irreplaceable *mystique* which attaches to this place is not merely a pious hang-over from the past, but a reality of the world we live in ; and it is right and natural that every effort should be made to keep its holy places open to representatives of all the three world religions whose cradle it was. Yet that is a secondary issue : the significance of Palestine for the Christian churches and the Christian Gospel does not depend upon it. Going on pilgrimages cannot, in a world of jet-propelled air travel and radio-communications, have the meaning it had in earlier ages, when it was also a supremely real and risky penance. As for the religious meaning of Palestine, the Jews' very presence keeps that alive, and, political jars apart, they have no interest in denying Christians or Moslems access to their shrines.

Present Possibilities

Not that access is as easy as it has been ; much of the Holy Land is, moreover, losing beyond recall the appearance it kept from the dawn of history until so lately. Jerusalem is partitioned ; the beautiful Old City is under Arab rule, whilst the New, under Israel, is turning into a Westernized town with all the most unlovable features of a mushroom cosmopolis. From the standpoint of tourists or pilgrims, nothing could have been much worse than this partition. At the strong instance of most of the Western Churches, supplemented (for its own reasons) by that of the U.S.S.R., the U.N.O. recommended that Jerusalem should be administered as an international city ; and there was a time before the British withdrawal when this would have been possible. Since the war and the erection of the present frontiers there is however no likelihood that either Jordan or Israel will cede an inch of the precious territory to the other or to U.N.O. ; and our contributors to this present number do not concern themselves with this scheme, at one time so widely discussed as a Christian interest. They are

concerned mainly with the causes in which they themselves have laboured, of the survival and welfare of existing Christian communities, of Christian education both in Israel and Jordan, and also of those archæological studies which are of universal interest to historical, and especially of Biblical, scholars. All of these causes will continue to call for the material and spiritual help of Western Churches. And education especially is of an importance inseparable from the political aspect of the Middle East, whose present poverty and weakness constitute the world's worst liability to war. For the strengthening of these states—in which lies the best hope of peace—depends upon such things as re-fertilization of their soil, ordered political development, recognition of their mutual interdependence, and the general acceleration of their slow progress, all of which presuppose great advances in education. If fewer Christians go to the Middle East as tourists or on pilgrimage, as many as can possibly be sent will still be needed, for these missions of enlightenment and works of mercy.

INTERIM

The Essen Assembly

The present number of *The Frontier* is slightly enlarged in order to accommodate an adequate report, by our own correspondent, of the vast assembly of German Protestant Laity held at Essen the last weekend in August. British newspapers have shown a singular disregard of this phenomenal gathering : at the large daily press conferences held during the meeting our representative could see only one other accredited correspondent of the British press. There are reasons for this, of course : though one of them, we fear, is a bad one. The English do not like harbouring resentments of any kind, and most of them pride themselves on being easy-going, but there is a marked tendency to except Germany from the benefit of this rule as a special case ; and it is a tendency by no means absent from religious circles. The result is that the public is prone to avert its attention ; it does not much want to read anything about German affairs, good or bad. Among Christians, however, there is another reason for lack of response to the Essen Assembly which is of an entirely different kind.

Many of them wince at the mere possibility of a suggestion that the Kingdom of God could be furthered by efficiency in publicity and mass-organization.

* * * * *

There is no need, fortunately, to comment upon this objection; the account which follows will enable readers to judge for themselves. The point was raised by speakers who are quoted; and it has since then been discussed in the German weekly *Christ und Welt* in an article from which we translate the following paragraph:—

“The peculiar atmosphere of mass demonstrations transforms personal initiative into a kind of spiritual coercion. This assertion is confirmed by the fact that the opposite is also true. Those who are congenitally unresponsive to mass demonstrations or those who succeed in forcing themselves not to respond, are nowhere so abysmally lonely as amongst the thousands involved in a single event. It is well to remember that the Reformation did not begin with a large-scale demonstration but with a single man nailing a number of theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg without knowing, let alone planning, that these hammer blows would echo through the vaults of history. But that is not the end of the matter. For the Essen Conference is a fact. Facts always have their home, however, in different levels of reality. Probably a fact such as this great demonstration of Evangelical Christianity is more ‘superficial’ than, shall we say, the life or even a single day in the life of an unknown devoutly-minded human being. Nevertheless this kind of event is of weight and significance on the level of public life. That level must not be scoffed at, for it is in public life that the *atmosphere* is created in which the decisions of the conscience and the decisions of history are made.”

The Trade Union Congress

A good deal of alarm and despondency was expressed after the climax of the T.U.C.’s annual meeting at Brighton, when, against the advice of their whole platform of leaders the delegates had rejected the motion to keep wages stabilised. The consequences of this may well embarrass the Government in its efforts to re-arm without inflation, and on national grounds there is almost everything to be said against anything that may increase wage claims. Nevertheless, the aspersion of “irresponsibility” which was heard in Trade Union as well as other quarters is not borne out by what actually occurred at Brighton. The restiveness

of the Unionists under the sway of their powerful Council is not so very deplorable, nor is an occasional defeat of the platform by the floor unhealthy from a democratic point of view. Behind this inconvenient decision there was irritation but not irresponsibility. Indeed, an explicit recognition of the need for Trade Union responsibility was shown throughout the debates, and at the same time as they called off the truce to wage competition the same men confirmed the tribunals which are the new factor in regulating claims. This is not at all like irresponsibility. In any particular case it is necessary to know just what a person's responsibility is, to whom, and how he himself sees it.

The Road to Realism

This said, the awkwardness of the decision on wages is not to be minimised. When the Government is raising the pay of Army service to make it compare more fairly with civil employment, Trade Unionists are definitely in the wrong if they use that as an argument for restoring inequality in their own favour. The forcing of wage increases is also, as a policy, out-of-date now that, in the final effect, such demands are met by watering the currency or by taxing the incomes that are raised. Beyond a point, and we have probably reached it, sporadic efforts to raise wages do less to equalise welfare than force the weaker to the wall. What is worse, this form of internal competition can diminish the ability of the country as a whole to compete for its living in the world. T.U.C. discussions still reflect too many ideas that are a hang-over from an earlier and different world. But they also manifest an immense advance in realism and responsibility since Labour came to power. The debate at Brighton on education, with its well thought-out contributions and its emphasis on the paramount importance of the teachers and their profession, was another illustration of this.

Centenary of a "Tornado"

In the autumn of 1850 there was what John Morley called a "religious tornado" in England. It was occasioned by the Pope's establishment of a diocesan system for the English Roman Catholics in place of the Vicars Apostolic under whom their affairs had hitherto been administered. Cardinal Wiseman, the newly appointed Archbishop of Westminster, inadvertently started a tremendous uproar by a tactlessly flamboyant Pastoral Letter to his co-religionists which he had not realized would be taken up by the public press. The Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, who had a noble record as an advocate

of religious liberty, lost his head, and without consulting his colleagues, published a manifesto in which he denounced "the aggression of the Pope" as "insolent and insidious". What happened then is graphically described by Disraeli in *Endymion*. "A confused public wanted to be led, and now they were led. They sprang to their feet like an armed man. The Corporation of London, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, had audiences of the Queen; the counties met, the municipalities memorialized; before the first of January there had been held nearly seven thousand public meetings." The storm eventually subsided, largely owing to the skill and the good humour with which Wiseman redressed his initial mistake.

Mr. Gladstone, who had no partiality for Roman Catholicism, was one of the few men in the country who preserved a sense of proportion. In the course of the debate on the fatuous "Ecclesiastical Titles Bill" which was passed in the following year, he made one of his greatest speeches. "You speak of the progress of the Roman Catholic religion," he said, "and you pretend to meet that progress by a measure false in principle as it is ludicrous in extent. You must meet the progress of that spiritual system by the progress of another; you can never do it by penal enactments." The episode is a reminder that the English have no native immunity from outbursts of wild fanaticism. While there is no reason to apprehend that Roman Catholics will again be the object of such an outburst, it would be foolish to be too confident that in the present state of the world a similar storm might not blow up which would derange the judgment of normally wise men. The advice given by James Martineau at the time of the "Papal Aggression" should be taken to heart by all who profess to respect civil and religious liberty: "Be just, and fear not; put not your trust in coercive laws; dream not that divine truth can be bought with the coin of human injury; be resolved, if ever you have to defend your own rights from encroachments, to enter the field without reproach."

THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN PALESTINE

THE country which we once knew as Palestine is now divided between Israel and Jordan, both non-Christian countries. Though there is in both complete freedom of worship, there is also in both a large group of people who sincerely and fervently hold to a religion of undoubted power and spirituality. Such people cannot but think it a reproach that another religion claiming to be the one true faith should be taught within their frontiers. We ourselves should probably look askance at a vigorous Buddhist missionary effort in England, a fact which we too often forget. The Muslim views Christianity as having been superseded by the teaching of Muhammed and thinks that for any Muslim to accept it would be a retrograde step. Moreover, the faithful Jew has been nourished from childhood in a tradition of exclusiveness. It would be futile and frivolous for a Christian to admire the uncompromising severity of the early Prophets and then to expect everyone in a Jewish state to welcome any other religious teaching than their own. It is of the very first importance in any estimate of the situation that we acknowledge both the strength and the essential reasonableness of this opposition.

Will there be Religious Toleration?

It is not, however, the opinion of the whole people. In both countries there are those who would either tolerate or even welcome the establishment of Christian schools. It is probable that the tolerance is more firmly based in Israel and the welcome more wide spread in Jordan. It is in Israel that one would find people who consider tolerance of other people's opinions as right in itself and as a thing to be actively worked for in the new State, however wrong-headed the opinions themselves may appear to be. We may, perhaps, be tempted to feel that there are not enough of such

people, but it is an attitude of mind which requires both profound courage and a long and stable political background. Indeed, one is moved to wonder how many of those Christians who agree with them do so because of their Christianity and not merely because they have been born into a climate of opinion where tolerance grows easily. In Jordan tolerance seems to be less the result of burning conviction than of a desire for a quiet life, which is not such an unreasonable desire in the Middle East of to-day. However, it is almost certainly true that there are more in Jordan who would openly welcome the establishment of Christian schools. This is, in the first place, because of the longer tradition of good Christian education, going back now for nearly a century, and because of the large number of leading people in the country who look back with gratitude to their education in such schools. Jewish contact with the Mission schools has been much less and dates back to only a few years before the second World War. It is true that those young people who have attended them are usually enthusiastic in their favour, but they are a very small number.

The New Immigrants

The perplexing feature of the present situation is not that these various schools of thought exist, but that it is still quite uncertain, both in Jordan and in Israel, which opinion will prevail. The difficulty of foreseeing the trend of opinion during the coming years is rendered still more complex by the fact the people's views are swayed to and fro by factors which have really very little bearing on the subject. In Israel the immediate problem is to produce a really workable State and everyone is quite determined that it shall be produced. That it might possibly fail to work is not an idea which seems to enter anyone's head. The greatest obstacle to this determination is not the Arab opposition, which may well prove in the long run to have been beneficial in that it bound together at a crucial period in the new state's history an amazingly heterogeneous group

of people who might not perhaps have been so willing as they were to sink their differences. It is rather the tremendous influx of new immigrants. We are concerned here not with the huge economic problems but the question of how to weld into a community which has not yet itself had time to find its own feet a vast additional number more numerous than the community they are joining. They come from almost every country of Europe and many other countries beside and they bring with them the ancient prejudices of the countries from which they come. They would not be human if they did not do so. Many of them have been tragically battered by the events of recent years and as a result they are super-sensitive to criticism and opposition. Moreover, a greater number of the new immigrants than anyone originally expected are drawn from the countries of the Arab-speaking world, so many, in fact, that it is said that if they continue to come at the present rate they will soon form 50 per cent of the population and Israel will have within its own borders that same clash of culture which was one of the difficulties of the old Palestinian situation. On top of this is the natural friction which grows up anywhere between new immigrants and those who already live in the country, each tending to accuse the other of wanting everything his own way.

Factors favouring Christian Schools

It would be as foolish to try to close one's eyes to these present tensions as it would be to blame any one for them. Any student of history could and should have foreseen them. They are so real and so inevitable that the need to overcome them is one of the paramount problems facing the new state, for if they are allowed to continue there is a real danger that a relaxation of the present feeling of Israel Contra Mundum might lead to a split within the state itself. The government is setting itself to iron out the differences and one of the most effective means is the establishment of universal primary education, which will give to all the next generation a com-

mon experience, and because of this it is doubtful whether it would be right for any outside agency to encourage people to send their children to private schools. There are those who would go further and say "No" to any greater variety within the educational system than is already provided within the educational pattern by the four types of recognized schools—Orthodox, "religious," liberal, and "trades-union". However, buildings and qualified teachers are scarce and many children can receive only half-day teaching and it is almost certain that a wide system of secondary schools is likely to be postponed for some time. Consequently there would seem to be a place for the re-opening of the old Missionary Secondary schools, some of which did important, though limited, work by educating Jews and Arabs together, and this, indeed, is provided for in the new provisional constitution.

Another factor working in favour of the Christian schools is the great desire on all sides that Israel shall not only be a workable state, but also be known to the world as an efficient and generous country. This makes them very sensitive to world opinion. Many people who would not otherwise be in favour of Christian education would be unhappy if they thought that Israel offered fewer privileges than would be provided in most western European countries. They really want to be able to hold their own with the older countries and those countries that they most admire are generous to their minorities.

East of the Jordan

The position in Jordan is equally complex, but very different. There the chief problems are that of the refugees and Jordan's relations with the other Arab countries. That the surrounding Arab states are tending to make things more and more difficult for Christians can hardly be denied and it will not be easy for Jordanians to stand out against the general trend of opinion in their part of the world, even if they want to. Nevertheless, they cannot but acknowledge that they are

very dependent upon the western countries if they are to cope with the great influx of refugees and upon Great Britain in particular for financial and military help if they are to continue as a state at all. Consequently, they are not likely in the near future to proceed to extreme measures against the Christian schools, though this same dependence may also tend to work inversely by producing a feeling of inferiority which some people at any rate may try to remove by going as far as they dare.

The present position is that east of the Jordan non-Christians do not attend scripture lessons or Christian prayers, but in Jerusalem they continue to attend both and so far no one has raised any objection. East of the Jordan also has appeared the first serious rival to the Christian schools in the form of the efficient and wealthy Isalmiyeh College at Amman. It appears to be generally recognized in Jordan that Jerusalem is in a special position and even the leading Muslims there have opposed the opening of the government schools on Sunday because of the Christian feeling. This is despite the fact that the Christians are much less numerous in Jerusalem than they were, the Christian population having suffered far more in proportion than the Muslims through loss of their property during the fighting. In Jewish Jerusalem, on the other hand, opposition to Christian schools is very strong, because of the large number of Orthodox Jews who have been settled there for a long time. The most liberal opinion is probably found in the port of Haifa with its important European and American connections.

Success and Failure

Such is the situation in which the remaining Christian schools find themselves and it is a position from which teachers in Mission schools elsewhere might well take warning, for there is one sense in which the recent events may be said to have been a judgment upon our schools. In the days of the Mandate it was our proud boast that our

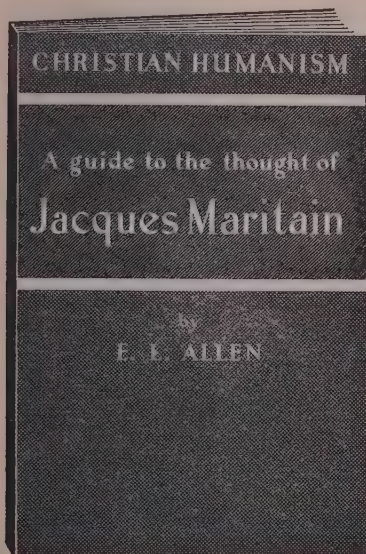
schools could claim with some reason to be the best in the country. Naturally, there were lapses, but there was probably more sound teaching, more selfless service and more real love of the pupils than in any other set of schools within the complicated educational pattern of Palestine. The judgment upon them is not that they were not good schools, but that they were not good enough for the occasion. The tragic circumstances of the time demanded prophecy and all we could give them was an excellent all-round education.

Of course, the pressure of outside events was tremendous and, whatever educational enthusiasts may say to the contrary, a day school can have almost no permanent influence upon the character of a boy or girl if the home influence is diametrically opposed. It is perfectly true that we did have children of many different nationalities working and playing together—in one school there were as many as twenty-seven—and this was no small achievement. Within a politically embittered country we created oases of quiet where joint education was possible. Our failure was that, whereas on the one hand such education would be quite impossible without the quiet that our schools provided, we never managed to find any way to produce the quiet than by deliberately keeping the bitterness outside and by banning politics. We thus made it perhaps a little too easy to be friendly and were unable to prepare the children for life in a world where contacts between them would be both unnatural and suspect. It would be unfair and unwise for any outsider to belittle what we did achieve, but it does not seem to have been enough and God has taken away from us, at any rate for a time, the possibility of having both Arabs and Jews in our schools together.

Tasks for the Future

What, then, remains? Foremost of all the education of the Christians, and the strengthening of the Christian Church. The Christians had just emerged from a long tunnel of non-

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Christian domination and neither their leaders nor their teachers, among whom we must count ourselves, seem to have warned them sufficiently that it could be no more than a short respite. Whether it was lack of courage or lack of foresight, it is no longer profitable to enquire. The result is that Christians in Palestine are terribly discouraged and they are facing the future in a kind of fatalism which is more Muslim than Christian. In Jordan, as we have already said, they have suffered loss of property out of proportion to their numbers and the Christian population of Jerusalem is sadly depleted. In Israel the Christians are mainly Arabs living in Nazareth which is still scheduled as a military area and they are not allowed to leave it without permission. In both countries they look forward to increasing difficulties in getting employment. There is a real danger that they may turn to Communism in despair of finding help elsewhere.

Our job, therefore, is to strengthen their faith and to persuade them of the truth of the Lord's words, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." This, of course, we cannot do unless our own faith is stronger and our theological understanding sounder than it was before. We must fight against any separatism, whether within the Church or within the State. The need for Christian unity is so clamant that it is sometimes difficult to hear the words of those who argue for a "gradual growing together" and if our schools can do something to advance the day of unity they will have done much. Moreover, we must train our children to be loyal members of these two new countries. It is no part of a Christian's duty to be disloyal, and it is their duty to work actively for the well-being of the state to which they belong. They are called upon to oppose the State only when they are asked to be disloyal to their faith and we are very far from that yet. We must also work for our own departure. It is a matter for some doubt how long we shall be able to continue Christian schools with non-Palestinian teachers and it is probably not right that we should want to do so for

long. We must be grateful for every year that we are allowed to carry on and we must work and pray for that day when we are no longer necessary. Probably other people will decide that it has come before we recognize it ourselves. Therefore, our whole energies must be turned to the building up of the Christian people themselves, because it cannot but be that they will have a difficult time. At the very best they will be citizens of a country whose people may be kind to them, but will never completely understand them.

Are we then to refuse non-Christians in our schools? Certainly not. The doors of the school can be closed to no one. They will be both welcomed and given the best education we can offer if they want to come. We shall show them the truths of the Christian faith objectively and fairly, so that when they come to judge the claims of Christ they will do so on the basis of knowledge and not of hearsay. However, their evangelization is NOT our task. When the time comes that our Lord invites them to Him, it will probably not be by our tongues that He will speak. The people of the country will surely speak more eloquently.

DENIS BALLY.

PALESTINE IN CHRISTIAN STUDIES

ARE there any spiritual benefits to be derived by Christians from contacts with the Holy Land which cannot be gained from a deeper acquaintance with the Bible? Now that sovereignty over Palestine has passed from Christian hands this question is raised in an acute and fundamental form. It must be answered clearly by the Churches if they are to allay widespread misgivings that the care of Holy Places is only a peg on which to hang cloaks for diplomatic manoeuvres.

The question must be answered by the Churches because it is in their name that political claims are made in international assemblies and because these claims are based ultimately on Christian beliefs. Christianity, we are constantly told, is a historical religion bound up with events which happen in history at such and such a time and such and such a place. Deprived of firm roots in time and place, can the claims of Christian faith upon the world be maintained? Nothing less than this is at stake when we consider what the Holy Land means to us.

The question must be answered anew because of new political circumstances. There were two defects inherent in the old political circumstances which can now be remedied. First, the tradition of freedom of religious action, which British rule ensured, enabled Christians to take for granted too much that is vital to their belief. A knowledge of Palestine under these rather easy conditions became a laudable but optional extension of an individual's religious interests. It is not unprofitable to compare this with the response of Jewish communities throughout the world, where even in the darkest periods of exile the bulwarks of Zion have always been well marked by young and old alike.

Secondly, for British Christians—of the younger generations at least—military and political events in Palestine have destroyed the “mystique” of a Land known previously

only through the reading of the Bible. The thundering hooves of Allenby's cavalry in the Plain of Esdraelon, the untractable political disputes of Galilee and all the day to day responsibilities of government, though bringing us in closer association with the places, have obscured the vision of Christian History spread before us there. We can read as much of Palestine in the newspapers as in the Bible.

It is often said that such events are the stuff of which the Bible narrative is made and a useful correction to the tendency of pious people to regard Palestine as a religious museum in a peaceful backwater of world history. That is true as long as it does not stop short at a complacent sort of historical determinism. As Christians we cannot be content to see ourselves in the Holy Land in the rôle of Assyrian or Roman governors, though we may at times have shared the appetite of an Nebuchadnezzar for Empire and the passion of a Pontius Pilate for administrative correctitude. As Christians, furthermore, we come to Palestine and its peoples not as aliens but as joint heirs to its spiritual heritage. If there is one lesson which is to be learned from our experience it is that our position as Christians with a special interest in Palestine has not always been easy to reconcile with our position as the secular rulers pledged to a humane and liberal regime. In our desire to be upright rulers have we not perhaps fallen over backwards? In our determination to be tolerant did we not drain our power of any specifically Christian content? Did not familiarity with the sites of Biblical events breed some neglect?

This is therefore the appropriate juncture in world affairs to re-examine the spiritual needs and interests in the Holy Land of our country and our churches. They have, broadly speaking, been satisfied in two ways, pilgrimage and study. The earlier must surely be the practice of pilgrimage which, due to the Holy Year of the Roman Catholic Church and the revived interest displayed by the Moscow Patriarchate, has

been the first to return to prominence after the years of world war and local strife. In this country, however, outside the Roman Catholic community, pilgrimage is not common; moreover, nowhere would it be regarded as an essential of Christian membership but rather as one of many possible sources of benefit to the individual. It is otherwise with biblical studies, the results of which are felt wherever the Bible is read. Archæological is no less important than literary investigation. For this purpose there must be freedom of access to the places as to the documents that contain evidence of the events which the Gospels proclaim. Let us therefore hope that those now in control of the new states of Israel and Jordan will not be prevented either from bigotry or fear of others' motives from allowing sacred studies to be pursued unhindered by those of all faiths.

It is no easy task for those reared in liberal and imperial traditions to invite toleration from the East. The record of Christendom is by no means unblemished; furthermore we in the West incline to regard liberty as the result of our history and a blessing to be bestowed wherever we have brought our way of life. Indeed if freedom were but the flower of Western culture we might well be invited to cultivate it more intensively in our own Western garden. We must, therefore, be prepared to admit our shortcomings here both in understanding and in practice, for there can be no claim for recognition of our spiritual interests in the Holy Land unless we accept toleration not merely as a gracious act to be expected of all who call themselves civilized but as essential to the spiritual development of mankind.

We in this country must also consider our own record in the field of sacred studies in Palestine, where we have made great contributions but where the impetus with which our forefathers entered the field in the nineteenth century hardly seems to have been maintained. *The Palestine Exploration Fund* was founded in 1865, with the support of many Christian denominations and of English Jewry, to promote the investigation of Biblical sites by methods of scientific

enquiry. The surveys and excavations carried out with the Fund's assistance have raised the standards of scholarship and scripture teaching in many lands and many churches. The venture was launched with subscriptions from the Royal Family, civic authorities, the universities and the British Association, and after twenty-one years the Fund could claim 3,500 annual subscribers. Allowing for the economic changes since those days we may still wonder whether there is material evidence of an equivalent interest to-day. The short history of the *British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem* is perhaps the measure of this decline.

The School was founded after the 1914-18 war with the assistance of the Palestine Exploration Fund and the Colonial Office. It was considered fitting that the mandatory authority, who was responsible for the supervision of Holy Places and care of antiquities, should be represented by such an institution; for there were French and American Schools already engaged in researches and the training of young archæologists for the years of work that lay ahead. The Colonial Office, however, soon withdrew its modest annual grant of £500 and by 1936 the Director of the School reported as follows.

"The French School of Archaeology in Jerusalem has a large, permanent building and most adequate staff. The American School has endowed quarters, including lecture rooms and living quarters for staff and students. The Archaeological Faculty of the Hebrew University has been able to augment its personnel and to increase its accommodation. The British School has no quarters of its own. Its library is given space by the Americans, and the rest of its equipment, such as it is, is stored in a couple of rooms at the French School."

(Mr. P. L. O. Guy at the Sixteenth Annual General Meeting, 24th November, 1936.)

It would be misleading not to mention the fine work of the Palestine Government's Department of Antiquities during the years of the Mandate. That, however, cannot account for the apparent decline of interest shown by

individuals and institutions in this country when compared with the activity of their counterpart in France and U.S.A. Our British contribution remains as it was, save that the administrative services have of course ceased.

If our interest in the Holy Land consists of something more than the political and administrative responsibilities which have now passed into other hands, may we not hope for a revival in British churches and Universities of these studies, for their own sake and on behalf of the millions whose faith is in events of eternal and universal significance but inseparable from the soil of Palestine ?

JOHN DAVISON.

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MANY millions down the ages have echoed the psalmist's prayer for the peace of Jerusalem, a place that has succeeded in capturing men's affections as well as in stirring their imaginations. Jews, Christians, and Moslems have looked to the Holy City as a focal point in a holy land, if not (with much popular folklore) as the centre of all the earth. The history of these three monotheisms, often closely intertwined, surrounds both holy city and holy land, and no suggested solution of the problems of this small area of the earth's surface has the slightest chance of success, unless it bears an organic relation to this historico-religious context.

It is not the purpose of this article to trace the outlines of the history of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, or even of the Christian era of that history, but simply to present a picture of the present position of the Christian Church there, so as to inform Christian opinion and prayer at a time when the whole issue is again up for consideration by the U.N. General Assembly. For this picture to be in its right perspective it is necessary to paint boldly on a broad canvas. There is much ignorance and much sentimentality still in the attitude of many Christians towards the Holy Land. An example of this was the resolution passed just over a year ago by an international Christian Conference pressing for the early establishment of an indigenous church in Israel, apparently overlooking the fact that a Christian church had persisted through the varying circumstances of nearly twenty centuries in the soil where the Christian gospel was originally planted. What has been called “the Christian stake in the Holy Land” must not be allowed to go by default, but in order that Christians may press their claims aright and with some reasonable hope of success, they must know precisely what these specifically Christian interests are.

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Christianity is not ultimately dependent upon sites or soil, but being a historical religion it is, therefore, rooted in time and space. Much has been made of the slogan "souls before shrines" in relation to the question of the so-called Holy Places, but whereas it is true that the Christian should be more concerned about the welfare of his fellow man than about the preservation of a building, the authenticity of whose site may be questionable, however hallowed by antiquity and usage, it cannot be denied that holy places have played a noteworthy part in Christianity as in other religions. The whole of the area of this earth where the Son of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, spent those eventful thirty-odd years which marked the turning-point of human history, must always command the interest and respect, if not the veneration of Christians. It is difficult to believe that any Christian privileged to tread the soil or sail the waters or even fly the airways of the Holy Land to-day can be unmindful of the fact that our Lord passed that way nearly 2,000 years ago. Similarly, it is hard to understand how any Christian can be unconcerned with the present international discussions about the future of this same Holy Land.

The now generally admitted sin of Christian disunity appears in a tragically poignant light in the land of the origins of Christianity. Face to face with superior numbers representing the two other great monotheisms, Judaism and Islam, it is a shameful scandal that Christians there cannot even keep their major festivals on the same dates, let alone worship together in unity. And not even on the current issues of the future of Jerusalem and the fate of the Holy Land has it been found possible for a single common voice to speak for the whole of Christendom.

The main and the most disastrous, though not the oldest division of Christendom is that into East and West. Earlier divisions had taken place and still survive amongst those we know as Eastern Christians, and later divisions took place and still survive amongst those we call Western Christians.

But the schism between East and West has had nine centuries in which to harden, and during all but the last fifty years or so of that period Eastern and Western Christian traditions grew up in almost complete mutual ignorance and isolation. This should not have been the case in Jerusalem and the Holy Land, for here both Eastern and Western branches of Christendom met, as rarely elsewhere, in their common home. But alas ! even here, where the religion of universal peace and brotherhood was first promulgated, where He, Whose name all Christians bear, prayed that all might be one, Christians of East and West, living side by side in a mostly non-Christian environment, have had very little to do with one another, and have made little or no attempt to assist the realization of the prayer of their common Lord.

Eastern Christianity in the Holy Land to-day means first and foremost the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Like the Anglican Church the Orthodox Church of the East consists of a number of federated auto-cephalous churches in communion with each other. The chief representative of this group in the Holy Land is the Greek Orthodox Church, for the monastic brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre, which has a controlling share in the government of the Patriarchate, is Greek-speaking. The Greeks with the Armenians and the Latins are joint custodians of the statutory Holy Places common to all Christendom. The majority of the laity and the parochial clergy of the Orthodox Church in the Jerusalem Patriarchate, however, are Arabic-speaking, and the Arab Orthodox have often voiced their dissatisfaction with the inferior rôle allotted to them. The Russian Orthodox Church has also long been represented in the Holy Land, owning much property, a good deal of it originally designed to accommodate pilgrims and pious old folk. Since the revival of the Moscow Patriarchate the Russian Orthodox community here as elsewhere has been split into two, some supporting the new Moscow Patriarchate, some opposing it and belonging to the so-called Karlovtsy synod. The

partition of "Palestine" has resulted in the anti-Moscow group taking refuge on the Arab side of the line, now Jordan territory, the others remaining on the Jewish side, now Israel. These latter retain the greater part of the property including the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and Cathedral in Jerusalem and the convents at Ain Karim and Jaffa; they have also received a new archimandrite sent from Moscow. Up to the end of the British Mandate there were in addition other national Orthodox communities represented in Jerusalem, but on a much smaller scale.

Other Eastern Christians of note are the Armenian Orthodox, the Copts, the Abyssinians, and the Syrians, all of whom broke away from the Orthodox Church long before the great schism of the eleventh century. The Armenians, joint custodians with the Greeks and the Latins of certain holy places, have their own Patriarch of Jerusalem, and their work is centred in the monastic community of St. James with a spacious convent and a very beautiful cathedral on Mt. Zion. The Copts and the Syrians have their respective bishops in Jerusalem, and a number of convents and churches in Israel and Jordan. The Abyssinians have a convent in the Old City (Arab zone) of Jerusalem and a church in the Jewish sector of the city; the superior of the community is an Abbot.

Besides these Eastern Christians there are a number of former adherents of the Greek, Armenian, and Syrian Orthodox churches, who have accepted the papal supremacy and are known as Greek Catholics, Armenian Catholics or Syrian Catholics, or Uniat churches, i.e. churches that have accepted union with the papal see. These groups are numerically small with the exception of the Greek Catholics, who have increased greatly of late years, but they are of great interest if only as an indication of the extent to which the Church of Rome is prepared to go in order to embrace Christians of other traditions. The Uniat churches in accepting the papal obedience have been allowed to keep their Eastern rites and ceremonies, vernacular services, and

married clergy. Under this heading also come the Maronites, the old Syriac-speaking church of the Lebanon which made its submission to Rome in Crusading times ; there is a small Maronite chapel with a priest in the Old City of Jerusalem.

And so we turn to the representatives of Western Christianity. The oldest and largest and most influential of these is the great Latin Church, as it is usually called in Jerusalem, or the Church of Rome. Most of the great religious orders, Benedictines, Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits, and the rest are represented, the Franciscans having been entrusted with the custody of Latin rights in the Holy Land since the thirteenth century. A Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem was established in Crusading times, being revived just over 100 years ago after a long lapse. The almost traditional rivalry between the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Franciscan Custos of the Holy Land would seem to have been finally overcome in the appointment last year of the Custos as Patriarch.

The Anglican Church has had work in the Holy Land since 1820, and an Anglican Bishopric in Jerusalem was established in 1841 on a rather curious Anglo-Prussian basis. The Bishopric was reconstituted on a purely Anglican basis in 1887, and the Jerusalem and the East Mission founded to organize the Bishop's work. As well as this Society two older Anglican Societies, the Church Missions to Jews and the Church Missionary Society, have been active, and largely as a result of C.M.S. activity an Arab Anglican Church Council was formed to co-ordinate the work of the Arab clergy and their congregations. In addition to ordinary pastoral and parochial work these Anglican agencies have been responsible for much valuable educational and medical work, and in recent months for refugee relief.

Protestant communities have also sent their representatives to the Holy Land, prominent among them being the Lutherans, the Church of Scotland, and American Method-

ists and Baptists. The events of the past few years have inevitably affected this work. Much of the Lutheran work had been German in origin and so was curtailed or closed down during the World War years; now much of it has opened up again, mainly on the Arab side of the line, under the supervision of the Lutheran World Federation. The Church of Scotland is one of the few Christian communities in the Holy Land to-day, whose interests and property lie solely on one side of the line, for as a result of the Arab-Jewish War of 1948 all Church of Scotland premises and personnel are now in Israel. There are also numerous smaller and younger groups busily engaged in missionary work, the Pentecostals, Plymouth Brethren, Seventh Day Adventists, and some working as individual missionaries up and down the country.

What a catalogue of dissipated effort this makes! But what a unique opportunity for œcumenical contacts on a scale hardly possible anywhere else! The present writer has expressed himself on these possibilities before and is glad to do so again. Both Holy City and Holy Land are of world significance, geographically, historically, and spiritually; they always have been, and they always will be to the end of time. East and West meet here. Three world religions have specially sacred associations here. Many opposing armies and ideologies have fought out their battles here. May it not be, therefore, that God is pointing us here to a providentially chosen and fitted centre for inter-faith and international action? Peace and unity are probably the most universally felt need of modern man. Such is most certainly God's desire and purpose for His creation. Jerusalem may yet be the source from which these blessings can flow freely to all. Then indeed would Mount Zion be "the joy of the whole earth".

C. WITTON-DAVIES.

THE ESSEN ASSEMBLY OF THE GERMAN PROTESTANT LAITY

(From *The Frontier* Correspondent)

PERHAPS the most astonishing and inspiring feature of the great gathering of German laity which took place in Essen from August 22nd-27th was the tremendous public interest which it aroused. From start to finish and indeed many weeks before it actually began it was front-page news throughout the German Press; few Church conferences can ever have been so efficiently and widely publicized. Nearly 300 Press and Radio reporters were present, and their needs were lavishly provided for by a most helpful and surprisingly numerous staff at Press headquarters under the genial direction of Dr. Oldag of the Evangelischer Presse-dienst. (One of the many subsidiary meetings was devoted to a discussion of the Christian responsibility of the journalist.) The new "rapprochement" between the Press and the Church meant that detailed news of this great Assembly reached practically the whole German population. The fact that a Church conference was for a whole week almost the sole topic in the Press and daily conversation throughout Germany (and the 180,000 who attended the gigantic final open-air meeting on Sunday the 27th, many of whom came—without permits—from the Russian Zone, will have taken their personal tidings of the Assembly into every parish in the land) is heartening and significant. The delegates from every parish who attended the whole Conference numbered well over 10,000 (thus approximately 3,000 and sometimes more were present in each of the four study and discussion groups). The city of Essen itself, now the third largest in Western Germany, devoted itself wholeheartedly to the welfare of its guests. Preparations had been going on for a whole year and it is no exaggeration (the Lord Mayor of Essen said as much) that Essen owed no less to the stimulus

of the "Kirchentag" than did the "Kirchentag" to the generous warmth of Essen's hospitality. Visitors who had seen Essen since the war declared that they now hardly recognized the town, so much of it has been so quickly rebuilt. The new "saalbau", the Municipal Centre in which the opening ceremony took place, must be one of the most capacious as well as the most comely halls in Europe and it has been entirely rebuilt within the last year. Essen's citizens, predominantly Catholic, could not have been more friendly and helpful to the visitors. The main Conference took place in four great halls (rather like aeroplane hangars) in a huge and very beautifully tended park on the outskirts of the town.

A word about the origins of the Assembly. Last year Dr. Reinold von Thadden convened a meeting of Protestant laity in Hanover to discuss the urgent social, political, economic and cultural problems which are the special concern of the laymen. The meeting was so successful and fruitful that it was decided to make it an annual event and Essen was chosen in order to mark the Church's new urge to go out and meet the masses of contemporary industrial society on their own ground. Dr. von Thadden may need a little introduction to English readers though his is a household name in Germany. For many years he was the Secretary of the Student Christian Movement in Germany and during the Nazi regime he was a leading member of the Confessional Church. His whole family is famous for its staunch opposition to the Hitler regime and his sister Elizabeth was among those executed in 1944 for being involved in the anti-Hitler plot. (He has paid tribute to her in his recently published autobiography *Auf verlorenem Posten?* published by the Furche Verlag). In an article in the organ of the Confessional Church, *Die Stimme der Gemeinde* (August, 1950), and in a number of addresses at the Conference itself he explained his conception of "what the Kirchentag is and what it is not". The Church, he is convinced, must come right out into the open and set up the Cross in the very

midst of the non-Christian and anti-Christian world if it is to have a chance of making a fruitful impact on the masses outside its doors. "We must proclaim quite unequivocally that we await salvation from no other in this world than from Him who is worshipped in all Christian churches as the only Redeemer of man"—"we owe this witness to our generation." We are not, Dr. von Thadden declares, trying to form a laymen's "trade union" in opposition to the Bishops and clergy of the "official" Church. "The sole reason that impelled us to initiate this new movement of the laity was the thought of the responsibility that we as Christians bear towards the present age and towards the completely transformed intellectual and spiritual situation of these post-war years, a situation in which not only uprooted refugees and the working-class but also the so-called bourgeois classes are all involved. The great question of our time is whether the so-called Christian West has at its disposal and in its midst the intellectual, moral and spiritual forces to which it owes its very existence, whether they are there at all, and whether they can be mobilized in time. This is supremely the concern of the laity, for they represent the Church on all the battlefields of the secular world in which the great decisions of our time are being made. The relation of the Church to the world is concretely expressed in the laity who are compelled to act within the realities of workaday life. The laity should be the vanguard in the proclamation of the Gospel, for they meet the secularized man of our day where no official representative of the Church can meet him. They represent the Church in all those spheres in which only the non-theologian has the necessary expert knowledge to enable him to translate the Gospel into living, concretely applicable terms. The purpose of this annual Assembly is to help the laity in this supremely important task of "translation" and evangelization in all the varied spheres of the common life, to consult together in a brotherly search for the Christian approach to the urgent social, political and economic problems that press upon us and,

above all, to help the secularized world of our time to find its way back to the Father's house. To be able to do that the Church must *meet* contemporary man on the level of his own problems and hopes, disillusionment and guilt, not as a self-satisfied coterie of the devout but as a body of humble Christian disciples determined to take upon its heart and conscience the great unsolved problems of the technical age. "Only a whole-hearted openness to the conditions and sufferings of everyday life can recover for the Church that place which it once held in the heart of the common man."¹

At the great opening meeting in the Saalbau the President of the Federal Republic, Dr. Heuss, as well as Chancellor Adenauer and Vice-Chancellor Blücher were present. Many other ministers of the Federal Government were there too and the Allied High Commission was represented by General Bishop. It was gratifying to note that he was as warmly applauded as any other speaker. The World Council of Churches was represented by Dr. Visser t'Hooft and Bishop Högsbro of Denmark, and a miner made a remarkable speech on behalf of the Ruhr mining industry ("don't preach us dead—preach us alive"—became one of the watch-words of the Conference and it was spoken by this forthright miner Karl Jung). Catholic participation was a no less remarkable feature of the Assembly than that of the "working-class" and a local priest spoke a warm-hearted word of welcome to his Protestant brethren in the opening meeting. President Dr. Heuss usefully defined the theme of the conference by pointing out that it was not "Save the human *soul*!" but "Save the human *being*", i.e. the whole existence of the human being in all its varied spheres, and he added that this must demand the co-operation of Christian men in all the Churches. Dr. Adenauer, who said it gave him particular joy to find himself, as a Catholic, among this great Protestant

¹ The above is a résumé of Dr. Thadden's observations in the article quoted ("Die Stimme der Gemeinde") and in his "programmatical" address to the opening session of the Assembly.

assembly, suggested that many people did not even yet appreciate the gravity of the present international crisis, a crisis which, in his view, it would be impossible to resolve with the forces and instruments of politics and reason alone. The supreme need was for the transforming power of Christian goodness.

A particularly warm welcome was given to Bishop Dibelius of Berlin who brought tidings and greetings from the Church in the Russian Zone, 2,000 members of which in Berlin-Brandenburg alone had applied, in vain, for permits to attend. "The Iron Curtain is non-existent as far as the Church is concerned and this Assembly is as much the affair of our brethren in the Eastern Zone as of us in the West." A number of delegates from the Russian Zone did in fact get across in time.

The general theme of the Conference, which has already been summarized in these pages (August number, p. 295-6), was "Save the Human Being" and this was subdivided into four topics: "Save his freedom", "Save his home and homeland", "Save his family", and "Save his Faith". The mornings sessions were devoted to lectures on each of these topics, the afternoons to discussion, whilst the third day was spent drafting the resolutions to be sent up from each group. These resolutions were read at the final meeting in the Stadium and Bishop Lilje, Dr. Neimoeller, Bishop Dibelius, and Dr. Heinemann, the Minister of the Interior, added a final summing-up of the work of each group. What follows is an attempt to summarize the main contributions under each topic. If one topic seems to be more adequately treated than another the writer must plead that it was obviously impossible for him to be in four places at once though his report is based as far as possible on first-hand observation.

1. The Problem of Personal Freedom

Dr. Müller-Armack opened by suggesting that we should not take it for granted either that the large-scale factory was the inevitable unit

of production in modern society or that it was necessarily inimical to the personal freedom of the worker. It had been proved, not least in the Krupp factories in Essen, that the individual worker could still be treated as a person. The Ruhr miner was a shining example of independence (above all in his religious and family life), maintained despite the increasingly large-scale developments of the mining industry. Regierungsrat Klein thought, on the other hand, that it was impossible to exaggerate the menace to human freedom of the impersonal, oversized factory nor did he see how the dignity and independence of the worker could be maintained without a modicum of personal property. A "new reverence for every man as a child of God" could only permeate society from the Church and he suggested as a practical measure that the Church should call upon the whole population voluntarily to contribute one mark per month, which would enable 10,000 three-roomed houses to be built and thus 120,000 houses per annum, until the whole working population could be house-owners and thus enjoy the precondition of personal freedom. Dr. Eberhard Müller argued that a free society can only be built up from small beginnings, that collectivism is totally inimical to personal freedom and that a radically new beginning must be made to create a healthy society with scope for individual initiative. The Church should initiate the creation of "cells with a healthy Christian life of their own", not isolated from the rest of society but "conscious of their contribution to a growing organism". After the evils of Nazi collectivism and with the present menace of Communist collectivism the real danger now was that many people were shrinking back from all co-operation with their fellows, thinking to find freedom in isolation from society. This was not possible, however, and sooner or later the need for communion (exploited by both Nazi and Communist ideologies) would break forth again. Here was a supreme opportunity for the Church, to invite the isolated and the homeless into its fellowship. At the final meeting Bishop Lilje probed the question at a deeper level by declaring that the "long dramatic story" of man's attempt arrogantly to "liberate" himself from God and to administer the earth for his own ends and without regard to Divine law had led before our own eyes to the tyranny of the total State. Man now knows that he has lost or is in process of losing his political and economic freedom, but does he know that he has lost it through disobedience to God? Does he know that the "freer" he becomes from God, the more enslaved he becomes to man? Only Jesus Christ can give the world freedom: "in His service alone is perfect freedom".

2. Save his Home and Homeland

This group was devoted primarily to the study of the refugee problem and attracted and maintained a particularly large attendance. The Rev. Elfan Rees, the Director of the Refugee Department of the World Council of Churches and Dr. Lukaschek, the Federal Minister for Refugees, were present at the first Session, which was addressed by Pastor Albertz, the Minister for Refugees in Lower Saxony. He declared that unless the Assembly regarded the refugee problem as the overriding problem before it all the other discussions would be worthless. The new danger, greater than any previous menace to the solution of the problem, was the possible claims of rearmament which, indeed, had already made themselves felt in recent weeks. Since Korea no more barracks had been available for the urgent housing of incoming refugees since they were being "reserved for other purposes". He asked the Assembly to come to a clear-cut decision on this matter, to declare itself absolutely opposed to rearmament in any shape or form and to throw its whole weight on the side of the refugees. Their calamity was great enough already but would become far greater once public energies were deflected to the claims of military preparation. In the discussion Dr. Lukaschek fully supported his colleague: "There will be no war, he said, if the refugee problem is tackled in all seriousness". Vehement objection to this view was expressed by other speakers, including pastors, and the controversy became so acute that the chairman decided to appoint a committee to thrash it out in private session. The report which it issued after a meeting lasting five hours showed that unanimity had not been reached though a frank unfolding of the whole problem had taken place. Dr. von Thadden himself intervened to say that though the Assembly was most anxious to represent a "powerful weight in the balance of peace" it had no authority or commission to make official pronouncements, one way or the other, on matters of political controversy outside its immediate theme. In fact the question (as formulated by Pastor Albertz—"Social justice or rearmament?") continued to occupy the Assembly, as was shown by a remarkable speech at a meeting convened to hear Dr. Gerstenmaier, one of the German delegates to the Council of Europe in Strassburg and the Director of the Evangelisches Hilfswerk. (Dr. Gerstenmaier was, incidentally, one of the few survivors among the conspirators of the ill-fated anti-Hitler plot of July 20, 1944.) He could not see, he said, in reply to Albertz and Lukaschek, how large-scale social measures would keep back a totalitarian world-power and prevent it extending

its satellite territory, especially if it did not need to take the risk of encountering any resistance worth mentioning. He agreed: "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh in vain", but "it is not said that it is a Christian virtue either to allow the watchmen to sleep or to abolish them altogether." Much as we abominate war, we cannot, he argued, evade the question: are we ready to defend our freedom *with* the others? The basic question is whether freedom and justice or force and dictatorship are to be the decisive forces in the heart of Europe.

It was refreshing to turn from these acute political controversies to the sociological analysis of the refugee situation presented by Frau Pfeil of Munich. On the basis of a recent investigation in Bavaria she divided the refugee population into three categories. The first group had already "settled down" quite satisfactorily, in fact some of them were already so comfortably off that they were beginning to look down on their less fortunate fellow refugees! The second group consists of those who were still bravely trying to make the grade against tremendous odds. They had not lost hope of finding a place for themselves in their new surroundings but the battle was hard and they were in particular need of friendship and encouragement to keep their courage and faith alive. The third group were those who had given up hope of better things. They were the very old, the infirm and also the young who had never known a better life and therefore had none to look back or forward to. These, most of all, especially in outlying country places, were in dire need of Christian friendship and support. "Every single one of us should feel called upon to help."

In the discussion, encouraging reports of building schemes initiated and carried through by individual parishes were presented and showed how much eminently practical work the Church is doing to help the refugees find their way to a normal life again. "Baugemeinden", of which there are fifteen in the province of Hessen alone, are parish building societies in which the parish finds all the money and labour—most of it refugee labour—to build housing estates for refugee families. (A highly successful scheme is afoot in the neighbourhood of Celle in Lower Saxony, not far from the great transit camp of Uelzen where the daily influx of refugees from Eastern Germany is received.) An even more intimate view of the refugee situation was given by Dr. March of Berlin, a leading nerve specialist, who argued that "home" was far more than a purely geographical or ecological concept. It implied a basic sense of "existential security" (Existentielle Gebor-

genheit) and was only fully realized where man "understood and was understood". Thus the problem of restoring man's home and homeland was not merely that of the refugee in the technical and literal sense of the term but of modern man in general. It was possible and nowadays increasingly common to be "homeless" even in one's own home and homeland. The real communication between persons which was the basis of the sense of "existential security" was becoming increasingly rare. An impersonal society was necessarily a loveless and a homeless society. "Where there is no love, man is infinitely alone." Yet it is in the depths of ultimate forsakenness that man realizes that there is no human way out of his predicament, that only the love of God can restore the human community. "We cannot save man, we cannot save his homeland, we can only pray that through our lives something of the love of God may attain concrete shape on earth."

Herr Klaus von Bismarck, a Church worker who confessed that, as a father of six sons, his experience of "infinite aloneness" (the topic on which he was scheduled to speak) was more theoretical than practical, suggested that the great need of our time was for small "brotherhoods" of Christian disciples who would venture fearlessly and "armed only with the message of God's love" into factories, workshops, refugee camps into the whole vast *terra incognita* of modern mass society to become, through their witness and service, "rallying points" of new Christian community. Several such "brotherhoods" were already at work in the Ruhr but many more were needed. Only in such small "groups of mutual trust" could man be saved from the freedom-destroying collectivism of our age and the soul-destroying isolation and loneliness which are its opposite pole. The Christian family, where it still existed, should form the nucleus of such communities.

In the final resolution of the group thanks were expressed for the continued help of the Church abroad and, specifically, for the work done on the refugee question by the recent Toronto meeting of the W.C.C. Frau Schroeder's suggestion (made to the Council of Europe in Strassburg) that a European Refugee Office should be set up was warmly supported and the Churches everywhere were called upon to "take the bitterness away from the infinitely lonely and offer them a real share in your common life". "Whoever gives a home to the homeless, takes in the Christ." (This was the theme of a moving sermon by General Superintendent Jacob of Cottbus at one of the early morning services: "the refugees are not, he said, anonymous

cases in the great card-index of misery, they are the brothers of Christ, through them Christ looks into our eyes, they are His face, His voice, for He is the brother of the poor, the humiliated, the hungry, the homeless and the naked, the King of beggars and children, the Friend of the outcast and the leper, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and in the Last Judgement He asks not what was our social standing, our political ideology, our material success, but whether we fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick and sheltered the homeless.”)

3. Save the Family

Günther Feuser opened the discussion by declaring that both over-employment and unemployment were undermining family life. Lack of both space and time meant that children were often regarded more as a burden than a joy. The Church should initiate house building on a large scale and press for the reduction of working hours and above all for the cessation of Sunday work. It was the basic essential of spiritually sound family life that there should be “adequate time for God”. This was the primary consideration, not the material problem of adequate space though both were of course interdependent. (This demand for “more time for God” was strikingly reinforced by a working man, Ludwig Scheffel, who spoke at the open-air men’s meeting on the last day of the Conference. “How can the working man find his way back to the Church, back to the family, back to a day of well-earned rest if he has to work on Sunday?”) Ministerial-direktor Dr. Koch of Düsseldorf also pleaded for a maximum working day of eight hours throughout industry and said that the excessive piece work which was typical of German working class life to-day was a sign of a fundamental sense of economic insecurity. It was paradoxical that half the working class should be driving itself to death through overwork whilst unemployment was so rife. Herr Franz Brauner of Dortmund said that State assistance for young people menaced by overcrowding, poverty, vice and disease was not enough. The individual Christian must feel a sense of immediate personal responsibility and do everything possible to help the young people adrift in his own parish and district, not leave it to official bodies who had far too much to cope with already. The Church should make the thousands of homeless young tramps its special concern and initiate the building of centres (preferably small and “homely”) for apprentices in the great industrial centres. At the final meeting Dr. Nie-moeller, in his summing up of the work of the group, declared that it

was "only in the power and fire of the love of Him who first loved us" that we could love others. "He alone is the Saviour for our common life" and "it is primarily to the family circle that He belongs and in which He first comes among us." "It is there that we must receive Him, for what is neglected there it is impossible to make up for anywhere else." "The members of our family are our immediate neighbours and real love, sacrificial service of one another, mutual understanding in the spirit of Christ must begin in the family and go out from there to permeate all the wider spheres of human society . . . there is the salt and the light for the whole world."

4. Save his Faith

This group, which attracted increasing numbers as the Conference proceeded, was concerned with the alienation of the Church from the masses in modern society and spent much time probing the reasons for the failure of the Church to make a fruitful impact on the secularised mind of our time. Dr. Willy Kramp, a Christian writer and poet who has only recently returned from a Russian prisoner of war camp, suggested that the three main reasons were the lack of real unity between the faith professed and the life lived by the great mass of clergy and laity, the failure of the Church to tackle the "social question" with a zeal equal to that displayed by the non- and anti-Christian movements of our age, and thirdly the failure of the Church to come to grips with the spiritual implications of modern scientific thought. Dr. Knorr (like most of the speakers in this group, a medical man) amplified this by saying that the Church cannot afford any longer to remain merely a "mutual aid society for the devout" but must take its Gospel out into the highways and byways of modern society, not wait for the masses to come back to Church of their own accord. Dr. Giesen added that the preacher should literally take a leaf out of Luther's book and at least make an attempt to translate the language of theology into the modern vernacular. Public worship was still so often like a "meeting of religious connoisseurs", practically unintelligible to the theologically and liturgically uninitiated. A new conception of "devoutness" was urgently needed. "Only he is truly devout who has experienced a personal encounter with Christ and who is compelled by His love to practise love himself." An organic unity of faith and life is possible only in a living personal relationship to Christ and the token of that authentic relationship is the Christian joy which triumphs over all the sufferings of the present in the knowledge of His redeeming love,

In the Resolution which the group sent up to the final meeting all Christians were called upon to hear and examine the "reproaches of the world" for "they are God's reminder to us of our shortcomings, guilt, and responsibility." "We call upon all Christians everywhere to place their whole lives, in family and school, office and workshop, politics and business, in the service of Jesus Christ. . . . Our Church has very largely become a phantom because we live in fact as if Christ were not the sole Lord of the whole of our life." In his comment on the work of the group, Dr. Heinemann, the Federal Minister of the Interior, said: "Let us make it clear to all the world that there is a way out of the great fear of our age, that that way is to accept the forgiveness offered us by Jesus Christ. Let us bear witness to the world that nothing can bring to nought this great salvation because God is mightier than all the powers of this world, that no one can put us into chains since the Son of God has risen from the dead. Let us declare to the world: 'The lords of your world all vanish but our Lord is coming.'"

This was also the message proclaimed to the great open-air gathering of Youth, by Dr. Niemoeller. 15,000 young people, representing youth groups from all parts of Germany, including some who had come, without permits, from the Russian Zone, gathered among the dahlia beds of the great "arena" in a simple act of witness. Each group bore its banner aloft, each with a Bible text, such as "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day and for ever". Bishop Dibelius declared that Jesus Christ took no pleasure in mere numbers. "He always works through a minority and the great question He puts to us is do we really belong, heart and soul, to this minority?" Dr. Niemoeller spoke on the "shipwreck" of our age and of the "four anchors" that we must, like St. Paul, throw out and hold fast. ("Fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern and wished for the day.") The first anchor was that "the powers of this world have not the last word, Jesus Christ is the Lord of this world, to Him we must cling, of

Him we must bear witness that He is the only Lord." The second is that "He has a plan for this world", the third that it is "not just a beautiful abstract idea, but one that He is working out in all times and places through His living witnesses in the Church", and the fourth is that "He calls us to work with Him here and now". This world will not be saved by material weapons or by money. "Jesus Christ has quite different weapons with which to save the world." He works in and through the weak things of this world. "The Cross is the greatest and the only true Power and as disciples of the Cross we are no longer the children of fear but the children of Hope." . . . "The world is afraid because it does not know Him who saves and will save throughout eternity."

At the great men's meeting on the final day (also in the "dahlia arena") Dr. Heinemann spoke of the "new conversation" between the Church and both sides of industry, the trade unions and the employers, which was a "new factor" in the life of our time. The Church had highly important work to do as mediator in the great social and political conflicts of to-day. On the controversial question of German rearmament Dr. Heinemann, himself a member of the Bonn cabinet, said that it was not for this Assembly to act as a "collective Pope". He had not yet made up his own mind and it was for each individual to grapple with the question in his own way, seeking help but not dictation from others. "When everyone thinks alike, no one thinks very much". Bishop Lilje said that it was nonsense to think that one age was nearer to Christ than another. Again it was a matter of individual decision and responsibility. "The most important question in Germany to-day is what the men between thirty and fifty really believe in, whom they are making up their minds to follow and obey." At the women's meeting held at the same time Miss Sarah Chakko brought the greetings of the World Council of Churches and spoke of the tiny band of Christians in India (2 per cent of the population) in whom something of the spirit of the early Church was alive. Nowhere was the importance of

the laity so great as in India. The only effective method of evangelization was through personal witness and this was above all the task of the laity.

The Conference culminated in the gigantic meeting in the Stadium at which more than 180,000 people were present. They came from all parts of Germany, including Berlin and the Russian Zone, to take part in this great act of witness. The Stadium itself has been built entirely from 200,000 cubic meters of rubble (hailed to the site by 800 daily lorry loads over a period of many months) forming a 40 feet high mound of solid rubble round the oval-shaped arena. Bleakly alone above the surface of the asphalt arena stands the forty-five-foot high cross from the ruined Melanchthon Church in Essen (destroyed, except for the Cross, in a raid in 1943). The stark symbolism of the "Cross above the ruins" was unforgettable. No less memorable was the sound of nearly 200,000 voices reciting the Lord's Prayer together and singing, as the closing act of praise, "Now thank we all our God." To this unique gathering Dr. Visser t'Hooft brought the greetings of the World Council and spoke of "the Churches throughout the world which have rediscovered with astonishment and joy that it is really true that there is *one* people of God above and beyond all the frontiers, *one* Body of Christ, the members of which, wherever they live, whatever language they speak, are inseparably bound together. Seeing therefore that, in the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews, we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside the sin which doth so easily beset us and run with patience the race that is set before us". It was opportune in this place that Dr. Visser t'Hooft should have added that it is not enough to know we are bound up with all the Christians throughout the world. "Our strength does not lie in mere mass and numbers." "We do not want to oppose a Christian mass movement to the great human movements of our time . . .", the letter to the Hebrews tells us where our true strength lies: "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith who for the

joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." That and only that, Dr. Visser t'Hooft concluded, is the secret of the ecumenical fellowship. "We are only strong in so far as we know that He is the victor. Dear Christians from the German lands: the earlier and the present-day history of your Church is of extraordinarily great importance for world Christendom. You have made some of the most glorious discoveries ever made by Christians. On the other hand, an eclipse of the sun had sometimes spread to other lands from Germany. Is it not true that a stream of blessing has always gone out from Germany when her men and women looked unto Jesus and darkness and destruction when He was forgotten?"

REVIEWS

Christian Belief. A Course of Open Lectures delivered in the University of Cambridge. By Alec R. Vidler. S.C.M. Press. 10s. 6d.

It is tremendously important that the lines of communication should be kept open between Christian theologians and educated men and women living in a society that understands less and less the conventional language of the Church. Dr. Vidler is well qualified for this task, and his lectures are worthy to stand in the same series as those of Dr. C. H. Dodd on "The Bible To-day". The lectures on *Christian Belief* cover an even wider field than Dodd's lectures, and there is, consequently, less room for originality. The special merit of this book lies in its combining compression and clarity without producing an effect of dullness. The first two lectures are called "Belief in God" and "God and Mankind". Here the writer discusses problems such as the personal character of God and the credibility of theism in a universe as vast as that which science has revealed to us. From the theistic proofs Vidler chooses out the moral one as alone really relevant to his purpose, and passes on to consider the core of Biblical revelation in God's dealings with His chosen people. In his third lecture on the work of Christ he makes the Christian witness at the end of the first

century A.D. his starting point, and deals then with the Holy Spirit, the Church, Forgiveness of Sins and Eternal Life.

The long appendices of references at the end of every lecture do not mean that Dr. Vidler is content with quotation rather than thought. It is, indeed, his gift of relevant and pungent quotation which often helps him to clinch an argument briefly. His view is always his own, clearly and decisively expressed, and it is a sign of the growing unity of theological thought in the churches that there is so much in this book that will command general assent. Dr. Vidler is one of those Anglican theologians who have taken the trouble to understand both the older and the newer Reformed Theology.

He has three gifts which are essential to anyone who sets out to converse with those who stand on the fringe of the Christian Faith. He has a very keen perception of the mystery and depth of human existence ; he understands that Christianity is meant to give us a guiding light in the darkness and not a pat answer to all our problems ; and he has a really Biblical sense of God as the Creator and Saviour of the world, who is not content to be the mere patron and consoler of a pietistic minority. So often the stranger who comes into our churches, or enters into discussion with us about our belief, must go away with great misgiving. He knows that the problem and mystery which confront him in life are immensely greater than the kind of religion with which we appear to be satisfied. He feels instinctively that, if there is to be an answer, it must be majestic and glorious if it is to be commensurate with the problem. And how effective is the witness to this glory and majesty which the preaching and life of our churches are bearing to-day ? Do not our present disunity and comparative contentment with it—in spite of our talk about our “unhappy divisions” —show that we are still only half awake to the claims of God and the world upon us ? Through his own wide contacts Dr. Vidler is intensely aware of these difficulties of men of good will outside the churches, and his book shows it.

One of the best lectures in this volume is the fourth, on the Holy Spirit, with its honest confession that conditions do not exist to-day in which anyone can write with full-blooded conviction on the subject. In spite of this disclaimer, it seems to the reviewer that here, more than in some of the other lectures, the writer is speaking with freshness and authority.

Among minor criticisms one may be mentioned here—Is there behind the symbolism of Doomsday nothing more than the truth that the

verdict upon history and upon all the actors in it, is pronounced simply by confrontation with the Word of God made flesh in Christ? This is most certainly true, but is it all the truth? If it is all the truth, then it is hard to see why the symbolism was used, and the truth not directly stated.

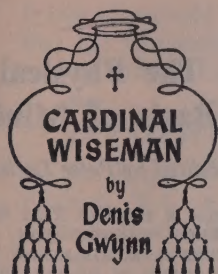
Obviously we must not interpret the symbolism crudely and literally, for it is saying something which faith says "In order not to be silent". But is there no more significance, as Dr. Vidler asserts, in the mythological last event in time than there is in the insertion or deletion of a last comma in the proof-reading of a book? Is not the conception of a total coming victory of God in Christ, in which the created universe will be included, not a necessary consequence of Dr. Vidler's own faith in God as the Creator and Saviour of a real world and a real temporal order? Is it because of this refusal of significance to a final event that Dr. Vidler has so little answer to give in his apologetic to the hopes of Communism, which in its emphasis on victory in this world has forgotten entirely the world that lies beyond?

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Allusions to the writers listed above have occurred or are likely to occur rather often in articles published in *The Frontier*, and some readers who do not know their original works will be glad to avail themselves of these excellent studies by E. L. Allen. Each booklet contains a clear, easily-read account of one of the seven teachers named above, in about forty pages of large type. Even those of us who are well-read in the subject may find such a précis useful. The series as a whole gives also a good idea of the extent to which these different authors represent a common front in Christian thought, and a consistent attitude towards modern social and political endeavours.

[Ed.]



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